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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAN, FRANCE, SOMALIA, CLONE MEAT

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¶1. Lead Stories Summary

Early evening newscasts by ZDF-TV's Heute and ARD-TV's Tagesschau opened with stories on ongoing protests in Iran. Most newspapers led with stories on Iran. Tagesspiegel and Frankfurter Rundschau opened with a story on the German hostages in Yemen. Editorials focused on Iran, the German economy, and the CDU platform.

¶2. Aftermath of Iranian Elections

All papers continue to give the events in Iran broad and extensive coverage. Stories on the most recent developments in Iran still dominate the front pages in the majority of the German print media; some even carry front-page pictures depicting people carrying posters of Neda, the martyr -- describing her as the new face of the Iranian revolution. The events in Iran were also the lead stories on ARD and ZDF TV's newscast. Several papers, as well as broadcast media, carried commentaries and editorials on the events.

ARD-TV's Tagesthemen commented: "The revolution 30 years ago was a great promise for freedom, but we in the West never understood this.

The many young people, who are now protesting in the streets, do not want anything else but freedom, independence and a true republic. But at the latest since revolutionary leader Khamenei's tough Friday sermon, one thing is clear: This state has irretrievably lost and now finally reversed its noble principles. It is a political and moral pile of debris. The efforts of Khamenei, his guardians, and experts are laying the way for their own end."

Norddeutscher Rundfunk Info Radio of Hamburg aired the following commentary: "The powers-that-be in Tehran are now suffering from a great uncertainty.... In addition, the authority of the religious leader has now been considerably damaged because it was he who early praised the official results and thus confirmed them. With the most recent statement of the Guardian Council, not only the official

outcome of the election seems to become increasingly uncertain but also Khamenei's reputation. The country is now changing hour by hour and the political structures are today totally different than they were before the elections."

Sueddeutsche Zeitung judged: "The religious state is now at a crossroads. It is faced with either a dictatorship run by the hardliners or with its collapse. In addition, the Islamic Republic is referring to old patterns. It is accusing Americans, British, and Germans of stirring up the unrest and damaging Iran. This, too, is a classic red herring once a government is about to come to its end. Only future cooperation or hostilities will now decide the future of the country - and pure coincidence. One single incident could be enough to push situation out of control. But how can the international community effectively exert influence without supplying the regime with new arguments for old conspiracy theories? How credible can U.S., British, and German solidarity be when all sides involved know that the demonstrators are alone when they look into the muzzles of the state's rifles?"

Financial Times Deutschland argued; "If in a dictatorship the official media contradict themselves, then we can perfectly assume that a power struggle within the regime is going on. That is why we can consider the most recent reports from Iran to be evidence that the alleged election falsifications and mass protests are dividing the state leadership. In the meantime, the protest movement considers itself to be strong enough to accept election results only if they are the result of internationally monitored new elections. But this will not happen. Khamenei has linked his fate so closely to Ahmadinejad that an ousting of the president could also be dangerous for him. That is why we must take another report, spread by the state media, very seriously: that the revolutionary guards, who are subject to Khamenei's orders, will take tough actions against the opposition."

Regional daily Rhein-Neckar Zeitung of Heidelberg opined: "Khomeini's revolution 30 years ago has consolidated into an inflexible dictatorship. And the appearance of being a democratic country has now turned to a real threat for the regime. The brutal moves against the protests can no longer be kept secret nor will it be possible to force the spirit of change back into the bottle. Any kind of development, even the worst, is now possible. But change in Iran has begun. The West should support these changes without any pussyfooting on behalf of human rights, which are undeniable and indivisible."

Regional daily Mannheimer Morgen held: "Of course, Moussavi as a former representative of the establishment does not want to turn the system upside down. But can he control resistance? The anger is growing, including the anger at Ayatollah Khamenei, because he has allied with President Ahmadinejad. With this move, the religious leader has come under fire. The unrestricted ruler over the people has now become vulnerable. The crisis is now taking an incalculable course for the Iranian revolution. At the end, even its legacy could be at stake."

Suedkurier of Konstanz maintained: "Ayatollah Rafsanjani's daughter has been imprisoned, and this is clear evidence that the leadership is mutilating each other in this power struggle. There is no doubt the ayatollahs are getting nervous. In their distress, have even admitted to irregularities in the elections, but this is no longer the main issue." In the view of regional daily Allgemeine Zeitung of Mainz "we are excited to see who of the inner-religious critics of Ayatollah Khamenei has the courage to take over control or whether they will leave it to ex-President Rafsanjani. We know that he massively supported Mousavi. Five family members of Rafsanjani have been arrested. Khamenei clearly knows where the pressure that is now erupting in the streets is coming from."

13. Western Reactions to Iran

Die Tageszeitung commented: "The time is ripe to hold universal rallies to support the Iranian opposition, which is so bravely risking its neck. At least the West should share the desire that the Iranian opposition reaches its goals and that no more blood is shed on this path. The expression of solidarity should come from the people, not from governments and least of all from the Israeli government. Netanyahu's criticism of the Iranian regime for

beating, arresting and torturing civilians, is accurate. However, it can be doubted whether his call for free elections in Tehran will achieve anything. President Obama is completely right to avoid taking sides. Expressions of sympathy from the head of a government, who has previously called for preemptive strikes against Iran if nuclear research is not put on ice, can only be counterproductive."

Regional daily Leipziger Volkszeitung wondered: "Why are the protests of western governments against electoral fraud and the bashing of demonstrators in Iran so restrained and as soft as wax? We could almost think that the leaders of the western countries feel embarrassed by breaking a lance for freedom and human rights. The Obama administration is almost apologetic in creating the impression that it does not want to interfere in Iran's domestic affairs in order to avoid a pretext for an increasingly brutal suppression and to jeopardize talks on Iran's efforts to get nuclear weapons. You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink, and if the United States does not want to 'drink,' it will lose reputation. And again, the West looks divided in foreign policy and is now offering the Tehran regime, which is on the defensive, a chance for a counter attack."

Regional daily Rheinische Post of Düsseldorf opined: "From Europe we are now witnessing strong protests, but now all eyes are on the United States. But Obama is reacting with restraint. As a duty, the United States is criticizing the restriction of freedom rights in Iran, complaining about state violence and its victims. But U.S. foreign policy has been characterized by efforts to avoid the bullying tones of the Bush era towards the Islamic world. This may look wise but is probably interpreted in Iran as a sign of weakness and as an indication that there is no closely coordinated western crisis strategy. In his brief time in office, Obama has delivered important speeches; now it is time for a few great words."

Regional daily Die Tagespost of Würzburg observed: "Film directors, photographers, the literary establishment, musicians, and other artists cannot be silenced -- even under the tough conditions of the Islamic Republic of Iran. They do not need private lessons but solidarity. We know-it-all westerners should not prescribe enlightenment to Persian culture."

Straubinger Tagblatt/Landshuter Zeitung declared: "The accusation of the Iranian leaders of the West supporting 'anarchy and vandalism' is not true because it is unfounded. But Europe and the United States have the duty to increase their engagement in Iran based on the universally valid UN charter and other international human and civil rights conventions. A few clear warnings are not enough. The oriental 'religious state' has again turned into a matter for the UN Security Council. In view of the international legal situation, it is one of the noblest tasks of the civilized world in the 21st century to give their support to the suppressed and courageously revolting Iranians."

14. French President Sarkozy's State of the Union

Sueddeutsche and FT Deutschland carried front-page photos showing French President Sarkozy marching by rows of colorful guards in a wing of the Versailles palace. The caption of the Sueddeutsche said: "For the first time since 1873, a French president addressed both chambers of the parliament. In his pompously staged speech, Sarkozy signaled support for the plan to ban burkas in France." FT Deutschland's caption headlined "He is the State" remarked: "Only a change of the constitution made Sarkozy's speech in the stately palace of the Sun King Louis XIV possible. The president defended the huge deficit spending and called for fighting the burkas. The opposition spoke of a cold coup."

In an editorial, Sueddeutsche commented: "Sarkozy did not need this forum. To reach his voters, he can get on TV all the time. His polls are improving and so are the chances that he will run again in three years and will be reelected. However, the president wants more than his reelection. He wants to leave a legacy behind and to change the republic according to his ideas. With his presentation, he redefined and changed his role as president. Like an American President, he delivered a State of the Union address, accounting for his policy to both parliamentarians and the people. Sarkozy hopes to become one of the grand presidents."

15. Somalia

Frankfurter Allgemeine commented: "It sounds funny when President Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, whose troops do not even have control of the capital, declares a state of emergency. However, the situation is not funny. Militant Islamists are increasingly brazen. The African Union and the international community must therefore make a quick decision on whether they want to intervene militarily.... Declaring the state of emergency could be a step that leads to a mandate. It is particularly important to Africa that Somalia does not turn into an operational basis for terrorists and al Qaida. Terrorism would soon spread to neighboring countries. The West should support those countries that are prepared to intervene."

16. Clone Meat

Mass-circulation, right-of-center tabloid Bild-Zeitung of Hamburg penned the following editorial: "At issue is not the meat of a cloned fattened bull or the milk of a cloned super cow, but at issue is the meat and the milk of the descendant of these cloned animals. The consumer wants better quality and cheaper prices -- and this is what cloning technology makes possible. . Clone meat has been available in the U.S. since 2008, but the EU directive had to be adopted to lay down the rules for the import and sale of clone meat in Europe. In the United States such meat does not need to be labeled! And this is the decisive point: clone products need a clear label. The consumer has a right to know where the steak on his plate comes from."

Sueddeutsche Zeitung argued: "Fortunately, cloning is expensive and inefficient. If at all, only precious stock animals will be cloned. The meat of their descendants must in any case be labeled, allowing consumers to decide what will land on their plates."

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